



Carnegie Shul Chatter

January 13, 2022



Light candles 4:59

Shabbat Services 10:00am

Zoom in for Services

Due to the high number of Covid cases in Allegheny County, the Shul's Board of Directors has decided to hold services by Zoom in January and February. Services begin at 10am and last 60-90 minutes. A link will be sent to all Shul members; if you don't receive it, contact Wendy Panizzi at panizziw@gmail.com.

Beshalach in a Nutshell

Exodus 13:17–17:16

From Chabad.org

Soon after allowing the children of Israel to depart from Egypt, Pharaoh chases after them to force their return, and the Israelites find themselves trapped between Pharaoh's armies and the sea. G-d tells Moses to raise his staff over the water; the sea splits to allow the Israelites to pass through, and then closes over the pursuing Egyptians. Moses and the children of Israel sing a song of praise and gratitude to G-d.

Enough is Enough

When is enough, enough?
When is it time to escape
the rat race and pursue
other interests?

Yes, it is nice to have money. We need to put a roof over our heads, to buy food and clothing, to pay our medical bills, to pay for our kids' education, and so many other things. But how much do we need and when is enough, enough?

So many people work longer than they really have to. And that is fine if they really enjoy their work. But why work if you no longer need to work and if you have enough money? There are so many other things you can do with your time.

The thing that really galls me is athletes who claim they love living in a particular city and have earned \$25 million or more for the last five years, then move on to

— *Continued on next page*

another city because they can get \$35 million a year by moving to a new team in a new city rather than staying put for \$33 million.

And how about the multi-billionaires? Many do the right thing and share the wealth with their employees and give to charities, but what about those who pay employees minimum wage, don't pay a penny in taxes, and don't have foundations that give millions to charity?

As this week's parsha tells us, sometimes enough is enough.



Dak Prescott's \$107.5 million total earnings for the 12 months through April 2021 set a record for NFL players.



In the desert the people suffer thirst and hunger, and repeatedly complain to Moses and Aaron. G-d miraculously sweetens the bitter waters of Marah, and later has Moses bring forth water from a rock by striking it with his staff. He causes manna to rain down from the heavens before dawn each morning, and quails to appear in the Israelite camp each evening.

The children of Israel are instructed to gather a double portion of manna on Friday, as none will descend on Shabbat, the divinely decreed day of rest. Some disobey and go to gather manna on the seventh day, but find nothing. Aaron preserves a small quantity of manna in a jar, as a testimony for future generations.

In Rephidim, the people are attacked by the Amalekites, who are defeated by Moses' prayers and an army raised by Joshua.

Rauh Jewish Archives at the Heinz History Center

I have been receiving a weekly e-newsletter from the Rauh Jewish Archives at the Heinz History Center. It is an excellent newsletter and includes fascinating articles, such as these, about Jewish life in Pittsburgh.

In this issue...

- ◆ The Autobiography of William Frank
- ◆ J. B. Bernstein Papers & Photographs
- ◆ Hebrew Burial Association
- ◆ "Precious Jewish Cooking"
- ◆ Events
- ◆ Pittsburgh Jewish Newspaper Project

To receive the newsletter free of charge, go to <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/DY1om9t>.



Enough is Enough Already

When you were a kid, did your mother ever say to you, “Enough is enough, already?” My mother certainly said that to me on so many occasions that I often stopped hearing what she was saying and thought instead, “Enough is enough, already!”

In this week’s parshah commentary that I have chosen from aish.com, Rabbi Yitzchak Zweig, discusses the wealth that the Children of Israel took when departing from Egypt.

Beshalach 5782: Enough is Enough!

Beshalach (Exodus 13:17-17:16)

Jan 9, 2022 | by Rabbi Yitzchak Zweig

GOOD MORNING! A few weeks ago, a good friend relayed the following story to me: His son was playing basketball in their driveway with a couple of friends. At one point, his son took an inadvertent blow to his mouth and a tooth crown popped out. After a fruitless search, he went inside and told his mother.



My friend's wife went outside, took up the cause, and found the crown in no time. Their son said in astonishment, “Mom, I looked for 15 minutes but couldn’t find it – how did you find it so quickly?” She explained, “You were looking for a small piece of enamel, I was looking for \$1,300 dollars!”

Understanding the true value of things and appreciating what you have is one of the keys to lifelong happiness. Unfortunately, the human condition makes this difficult to achieve. Our sages teach, “A person who has one hundred wants two hundred and person with two hundred wants four hundred” (Koheles Rabbah 1:13).

Empirically, it would seem that it doesn’t make a difference what sums we are discussing. Meaning, even if a person has one hundred million dollars he wants two hundred million; if he has two hundred million he wants four hundred million.

Honestly, is there a significant difference in one’s quality of life between having one hundred million dollars and having two hundred million?

Yet there is clearly an insatiable desire to accumulate ever more and more. This would probably explain why the world has about 2,500 billionaires (not surprisingly, New York City has the most billionaires of any city in the world with over a hundred). Unless one has acquired wealth the old-fashioned way – by inheriting it – there seems to be a powerful force driving one to continue spending energy, effort, and time working to gain more.

This week’s Torah reading teaches us a powerful lesson regarding wealth and also instructs us on how a person can know when they are satisfied with what they have. Seemingly, the goal is



to know when you have enough, but this is obviously quite difficult to achieve. (Similarly, many people have the same issue when it comes to eating, how does one incorporate a habit that will enable them not to overeat?)

God decreed that Abraham's descendants were to go to a land that was not their own and become slaves for four hundred years (Genesis 15:13). In the next verse, God promises Abraham that when his descendants leave the land of their bondage they will do so bearing great wealth. How did God fulfill this promise?

God pleaded with Moses that the Jewish people should ask their Egyptian neighbors for fine jewelry and clothes so that when they left Egypt they would have wealth (see Exodus 11:2). They did so and managed to accumulate significant going away presents (ibid 12:35-36). Yet according to our sages, all that they managed to get from the Egyptians as they were leaving paled in comparison to the booty they seized from the Egyptian soldiers who came to slaughter them but instead were drowned by God in the Red Sea.

Before we go on, I want to digress for a moment. In reading the above two paragraphs (or the original story in the Torah for that matter), one might walk away with the feeling that the Jewish people wrongly plundered the Egyptian populace. In fact, according to the Talmud (Sanhedrin 91a), this very accusation was raised before the court of Alexander the Great once he had conquered all of Eurasia.

The Jewish people were subpoenaed to answer the claim of the Egyptians that they stole their gold and silver upon leaving Egypt and never returned it. After all, the Egyptians had proof; the Jewish nation's own bible corroborated their accusation!

Gaviah Ben Pesisiah, a sage who appears just this one time in the entire Talmud, gave the following answer: "You have a legitimate claim, for the Torah records that we left Egypt with much of your gold and silver."

"But the very same Torah says that we were slaves for four hundred and thirty years (Exodus 12:40) – so in fact, we have a counterclaim! Pay us the wages for 600,000 slaves who labored day and night for four hundred and thirty years; for those wages surely exceed anything we might have taken when we left Egypt!" Alexander the Great turned to the Egyptian plaintiffs and demanded that they answer the counterclaim. "Give us three days to answer" the Egyptians pleaded. He granted them the time and they promptly disappeared and never returned.



Returning to our discussion, the Torah records in this week's parsha that there was so much wealth on the banks of the Red Sea that Moses literally had to pull them away from the seashore. This was because all the precious gold, silver, and fine jewelry that the Egyptian soldiers had worn (they even adorned their horses with jewels!) had sunk to the bottom of the Red Sea when they and their horses drowned. However, God delivered a miracle and all the



gold, silver, and jewels were brought up by the sea and deposited onto the shore from which the Jewish people were able to collect them.

Moses wanted the Jewish people to leave the seashore but struggled to get to them to comply because of all the wealth that was still lying on the sand in front of them. Even after they had collected a large amount, there was still more to be had and they didn't want to leave.



But this story begs the following question: Since the entire episode was a miracle, why didn't God just bring forth the exact amount that He wanted the Jewish people to take? Once they had collected everything, they would have surely left on their own without Moses having to admonish them to leave. Why should the sea deposit onto the banks more than they should take? Moreover, why would Moses even care if they stayed and collected more?



There is a very deep message here. God promised our forefather Abraham that the Jewish people would leave Egypt wealthy. But at what point can you consider yourself wealthy? At what point are you satisfied with what you have?

The answer is when you leave gold, silver, and precious jewels laying on the ground in front of you and you just walk away. That is what Moses was trying to teach them: You are wealthy now and you do not need any more. When they realized that they had so much that they could simply walk away from more they finally understood that they were in fact wealthy and left the seashore. Thus, God fulfilled his promise to Abraham.

In a similar (but much more mundane) vein, I recall hearing many years ago that Weight Watchers recommended, as a lifestyle change, a habit of leaving food on your plate during meals. In other words, instead of blindly consuming everything on your plate, consider how you feel, and when you feel satisfied stop eating and leave what is left on your plate. (I'll bet you didn't think you were going to get dieting tips from me today!)

When a person can honestly look at everything he has and say, "I have enough," then he can finally walk away from the pressures, the time, and the mind space required to stay in the "rat race." More importantly, he can begin to focus on other life enriching endeavors (family, travel, acquiring knowledge, etc.) and can truly begin to enjoy all the blessings that he has been given.



College Scholarships

Applications for need-based college scholarships for the 2022-2023 school year are available from the Jewish Scholarship Service (JSS) of the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh. This program is administered by Jewish Family and Community Services with funds made available through the generosity of families who have established endowments through the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh, Jewish Community Center, National Council of Jewish Women, Jewish Women International of Pittsburgh (formerly B'nai B'rith Women), The Pittsburgh Foundation and Rodef Shalom Congregation.

Scholarships are distributed on the basis of demonstrated financial need, with some providing for other factors such as academic achievement, field of study, school attending, and Jewish and general community involvement. Applicants must be Jewish, reside in Allegheny, Westmoreland, Beaver, Butler or Washington County for at least two years, and be attending an accredited institution of higher education as either an undergraduate or graduate student.

The 2022-2023 JSS online application is available at jfcspgh.org/scholarships. Applications should be submitted as early as possible to ensure processing, but the deadline is February 24, 2022. First-time applicants must be interviewed.

Yahrtzeits

This week the Carnegie Shul acknowledges the yahrtzeits of:

Belle Moskowitz

Harry C. Block

Samuel Miller

David Raskin

May their memories be for a blessing.

Donations

The Carnegie Shul is most grateful for the following recent donations:

Bari A Fauss

In Memory of Phyllis H. Deal

High Holiday Donation



If there were cellphones at the Red Sea

